

KING OF THE COURSES

Aberdonian gave the game to the US masses but after death was forgotten in the mists of time ... until now

Tom golfed America

Aberdonian Tom Bendelow's courses are among the most popular in America but his role in creating them is hidden away in history.

Just how did a Granite City loon who started work in his family's pie shop before moving on to the press room at the Press and Journal enter folklore in America?

Bendelow became an American institution, likened to the near mythical figure of Johnny Appleseed.

Born in 1774, Appleseed, or John Chapman to give him his proper name, was a legendary American who planted and supplied apple trees to much of the United States.

He planted nurseries rather than orchards, built fences around them to protect them from livestock, left the nurseries in the care of a neighbour, who sold trees on shares, and returned every year or two to tend the nursery.

His dream was for a land where blossoming apple trees were everywhere and no one went hungry.

Bendelow shared a similar vision, albeit one in which golf courses were scattered throughout the country, offering everyone the chance to play the game. He was true to his word and is acknowledged to have designed more

“*He was the most prolific designer, but left few records behind him*”

STUART BENDELOW

than 600 courses across the US and Canada.

What started as a chance meeting with New York industrialist Albert Colgate escalated into a career in golf for Bendelow. As word of his designs in New Jersey and New York spread, so too did the clamour for his services.

Today, Bendelow courses can be found in Illinois, Iowa, Kentucky, Kansas, Mississippi, Missouri, Michigan, Nebraska, Ohio, Pennsylvania, Texas and Wisconsin. But other countries also courted his expertise and there are several courses located in neighbouring Mexico and Canada, which provide a lasting legacy of the Aberdonian's vision.

But after his death in 1936, Bendelow's accomplishment was almost forgotten. However, thanks to his grandson, Stuart, Tom's life's work is at last being recognised.

Stuart Bendelow is a retired planning consultant who now lives in Sun City Hilton Head, Bluffton, South Carolina. He knew his grandfather had been a prolific designer, but was not prepared for the sheer size of the body of work.

Investigating the work of his grandfather has been a prolonged, extensive search,

PAUL THIRD



REPORTS

but Stuart is delighted that Tom's input into the growth of golf in America can now be shown.

Stuart said: “Over the four decades Thomas Bendelow worked, he is estimated to have contributed to the creation of more than 600 golf courses.”

“More than half of these were municipal or public courses, giving the opportunity for thousands of people – young, old, men, women, wealthy and working class – to experience golf.”

“From these roots, legions of players have evolved. More people have learned to play golf on a Bendelow-designed course than any other.”

Thanks to his grandson's efforts, Bendelow is now recognised for the role he played in the formative years of the sport across the Atlantic.

In 2005 Tom was inducted into the Illinois Golf Hall of Fame and Stuart is campaigning for Tom to be inducted into the World Golf Hall of Fame.

That it has taken this long for Bendelow's work – the vast majority of which was completed between 1900 and 1920 – to be recognised is perhaps due to how history has unfairly remembered him.

Bendelow was once described by one critic as “an imposter, a rogue and a film-flam con artist who never played golf”.

But as Stuart discovered, his grandfather was a pioneer in the development of the game in America and worked with luminaries such as Harry Vardon and A. G. Spalding and Brothers.

Stuart has worked hard at setting the record straight.

He said: “My first encounter with golf history was via the library and book shop to review the published accounts. What I found was either an absolute absence of any mention of Tom Bendelow's presence or some disparaging reference to an itinerate Scot who got passed off as a golf expert due to his Scottish accent.”

“If you were to believe these accounts, Bendelow was a liability to the early game.”

“When I began to read the early (1892 to 1920) American journals on golf I discovered a totally different accounting of Tom and his prominent position in the establishment



DRIVEN MAN: Tom Bendelow designed more than 600 courses and had an altruistic vision

and expansion of American golf.

“He was mentioned almost every month in the early golf journals and frequently reported in the local newspapers where he was active.”

“Not only was he America's most prolific designer of golf courses, but he was an active innovator, promoter and teacher of the game.”

“He was well-known and highly respected throughout his career and up until his

death in 1936. Then, for some reason I cannot explain, he was forgotten or lost in the histories.”

“My objective has been to get him and his achievement back into the forefront of American golf history.”

It should not be a difficult task.

Among Tom Bendelow's designs is the East Lake course at the Atlanta Athletic Club – the course which produced Bobby Jones, who re-

mains the only golfer to win all four major championships in the same year, the grand slam of golf.

Jones said of Bendelow's course: “It was extraordinary in that it gave a golfer the opportunity to use every wood and iron in his bag.”

Medinah Country Club in Illinois, which will host the 2012 Ryder Cup, is another of Bendelow's creations and is the reason Stuart became involved in restoring his grand-

father's reputation. Stuart added: “When Medinah Country Club and the US PGA contacted me in 1998 for background material before the 81st PGA championship at Medinah, I had no hard documentation on my grandfather, his life or his career.”

“Since my grandfather died a year before I was born, my knowledge of him and his work was limited to family stories and a few old clippings.

Carolina heritage of the tartan jacket

TOM Bendelow took his knowledge of golf from Aberdeen to America more than 100 years ago but, for his grandson Stuart, Scotland's tartan heritage remains close to his home in South Carolina.

Since retiring, Stuart and his wife, Rosemary, have relocated to Sun City Hilton Head, close to Hilton Head Island, home of the PGA Tour event the Verizon Heritage. It may not be the famous Green Jacket awarded to the Masters winner, but the Heritage winner dons the red plaid tartan jacket – a tradition which suits the tournament slogan of “Get Your Plaid On”.

The Heritage at Harbour Town Golf Links on Hilton Head Island has a 42-year history on the PGA Tour and boasts winners, including Jack Nicklaus, Arnold Palmer and favourite Davis Love III, who has won the event five times. Brian Davis handed victory to Jim Furyk in a play-off in this year's event when he called a



On a plate ... Jim Furyk in a play-off in this year's event when he called a

two-shot penalty on himself.

Davis, the son-in-law of former England goalkeeper Ray Clemence, birdied the tough final hole to tie with Furyk but on the first extra hole strayed into the hazard left of the green. He touched a loose reed on his back swing, called the referee and accepted the penalty after the incident had been studied on television. Since the Verizon Heritage first teed off in 1969, the only golfers who have won a major and have not played at Harbour Town are Ian Woosnam and Paul Lawrie.

“Tom was not very good at maintaining records or accounts of his work – and neither was his family.”

“That's why I am pushing for Tom Bendelow's induction into the World Golf Hall of Fame.”

“It would be the ultimate step in his reinstatement to the forefront of American golfing history.”

HAVE YOUR SAY: P.J.SPORT@AJL.CO.UK

TENNIS

Serena so stunned as Stosur celebrates

NADAL AND MELZER SET UP SEMI-FINAL MEETING

SERENA Williams last night struggled to comprehend how she could have played so badly after becoming the second modern great to fall to Samantha Stosur in this year's French Open.

Seventh-seed Stosur, who on Monday became the first woman for six years to beat Justine Henin at Roland Garros, held off a tremendous fightback by Williams, who had match point, to win 6-2, 6-7 (2-7), 8-6 and reach her second successive Roland Garros semi-final.

The Australian made full use of her impressive physique to overpower world number one Williams for almost two sets but looked to have blown her chance after serving for the match in the second. Yet she held her nerve in a dramatic decider to win in 2hr 24min.

For 2002 champion Williams, it was another quarter-final defeat at the French Open. She said: “It was my match and I lost it.”

Rafael Nadal last night shook off dogged resistance from Nicolas Pietrangeli to stay on course for a fifth French Open title.

Although he maintained his record of not having dropped a set at this year's tournament, the world number two was made to fight all the way by his fellow Spaniard before sealing a 7-6 (7-2), 7-6 (7-3), 6-4 victory in 2hr 35min.

Jurgen Melzer came from two sets down to beat number three seed Novak Djokovic and set up a semi-final meeting with Nadal.

After 4hr 15min of intense battle, number 22 seed Melzer triumphed 3-6, 2-6, 7-6 (7-3), 6-4 as Djokovic, who has claimed to be suffering from hayfever-like symptoms, faded.

Comfortable start for Baltacha

ELENA Baltacha made comfortable progress through her all-British first-round match in the Aegon Trophy in Nottingham with a 6-3, 6-3 win over Naomi Cavaday.

The British number one, ranked 62nd in the world, kicked off her grasscourt season in ideal fashion and set up a second-round match against another Briton, Anna Fitzpatrick, who beat compatriot Jade Windley 6-1, 6-1.

Baltacha said: “Last year I came here and I think I was ranked around 130 and this year around 60 and I do feel very confident.”

“What's really helped has been playing a lot of the top players this year, because coming here I don't feel so much pressure.”

Baltacha is joined in the second round by British number two Katie O'Brien after the East Yorkshire player saw off Austria's Nikola Pietrangeli 6-4, 2-6, 6-4.

RESULTS ROUND-UP

ATHLETICS

SOUTH HIGHLAND PRIMARY SCHOOLS CHAMPIONSHIPS (Bught Park, Inverness) – **Match results** – Section 1: Cradlehall 85pt; 2 Crown 52; 3 Inish 75; Section 2: 1 Holm 56; 2 Audekens and Duncan Forbes 52; Section 3: 1 Cradlehall 60; 2 Lochard 60; 3 Kirkhill 54. **Section 4:** 1 Glenurquhart 84; 2 Cawdor 71; 3 Beauly 74; **Section 5:** 1 Croy 49; 2 Anderster 46; 3 Kilchumna 40; **Section 6:** 1 Balaun 51; 2 Stratherrick 48; 3 Strathdean 36.

Overall standings – Boys: 1 Hilton; 2 Auldrean; 3 Beauly. Girls: 1 Balloch; 2 Crown; 3 Cairn Rangers 9; Detroit Tigers 2; Cleveland Indians 3; Florida Marlins 6; Milwaukee Brewers 4; Houston Astros 8; Washington Nationals 7; Kansas City Royals 6; LA Angels 3; LA Dodgers 1; Arizona Diamondbacks 0; NY Yankees 3; Baltimore Orioles 1; Pittsburgh Pirates 3; Chicago Cubs 2; San Diego Padres 2; NY Mets 4; San Francisco Giants 1; Colorado Rockies 2; Seattle Mariners 7; Minnesota Twins 1; St Louis Cardinals 8.

BASEBALL MAJOR LEAGUE – Atlanta Braves 7, Philadelphia Phillies 3; Boston Red Sox 9, Oakland Athletics 4; Chicago White Sox 6, Texas Rangers 9; Detroit Tigers 2, Cleveland Indians 3; Florida Marlins 6, Milwaukee Brewers 4; Houston Astros 8, Washington Nationals 7; Kansas City Royals 6, LA Angels 3; LA Dodgers 1, Arizona Diamondbacks 0; NY Yankees 3, Baltimore Orioles 1; Pittsburgh Pirates 3, Chicago Cubs 2; San Diego Padres 2, NY Mets 4; San Francisco Giants 1, Colorado Rockies 2; Seattle Mariners 7, Minnesota Twins 1; St Louis Cardinals 8.

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BOWLING

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SOUTH DIVISION

CHELMSFORD Essex 167-9 (R. N. ten Doeschate 98) v **Kent 170-4** (G. O. Jones 54). **Kent won by 6 wickets.**

CYCLING

DESIDIE THISTLE 10-MILE TIME TRIAL (Garlogie) – Men: 1 P. Kelman (over-40) 21min 55sec; 2 J. Barratt 22:34; 3 P. Bartholomew 23:47; 4 D. Warwick (over-40) 23:52; 5 S. Durhan 23:58; **Under-18:** L. Murchie 25:37; **Women:** 1 C. Wylie 26:05; 2 M. Petrie 29:13; 3 N. Cooper 29:29; 4 C. Besing 29:37.

CAITHNESS CC 10-MILE TIME TRIAL (Thurso) – Men: 1 P. Fenwick 24min 03sec; 2 R. Murdoch (under-16) 26:56; 3 R. Tosswill (over-40) and P. Cartwright (over-40) 27:01; 5 D. Spencer (over-40) 27:41; **Women:** 1 L. Stanger (over-40) 27:01.

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FOOTBALL

INTERNATIONALS – Albania 1, Andorra 0; Azerbaijan 0, Honduras 0; Belarus 0, Sweden 1; Greece 0, Paraguay 0; Norway 0, Ukraine 1; Serbia 0, Poland 0; Romania 0, FYR Macedonia 1; Zimbabwe 0, Brazil 3.

ABERDEENSHIRE AMATEURS – Soccer World Premier Division – Bon Accord City 1, Westdyke 0; Sportsmans Club 1, Cowie Thistle 3; Old Aberdonians 3, Great Western United 0.

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GOLF RETURNS

ALNESS – Andrew Winter Memorial Texas scramble open – D. Gilliland, B. Bowles, G. Ellis, K. Munro (Alness) 58 (4.9); S. Ross, A. Murray, C. McKeddie, (Alness) 58 (5.6); 52-4; N. Cameron, R. Cameron, D. Morris, R. Maclean (Braemar) 56 (3.